

I INTRODUCTION

The East Valley/680 Communities Neighborhood Improvement Plan is part of the City of San Jose's larger Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) planning process. The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, initiated in summer 2000, is a partnership of local neighborhood representatives, the City of San Jose, and the Redevelopment Agency to build clean, safe, and attractive communities with strong, independent and capable neighborhood organizations. The East Valley/680 Communities neighborhood is one of over twenty neighborhood areas that have been selected to be a part of the Strong Neighborhoods process. The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative will establish designated neighborhoods as a Redevelopment Area thereby allowing Redevelopment funds to be used for certain identified improvements.

The approximately 1,280-acre East Valley/680 Communities SNI planning area, located east of downtown San Jose, is generally bounded by Alum Rock Avenue to the north, Ocala Avenue to the south, King Road to the west, and South White Road to the east. It is comprised of ten residential neighborhoods, including Arbuckle, Capitol-Goss, Cassell, Dobern, Dorsa, Lyndale, Nancy Lane, National Hispanic University, Ryan and Sierra. Most of the Lyndale and National Hispanic University neighborhoods are "unincorporated areas", which are lands within the City of San Jose's urban service area (USAs) that remain under the County's land use and general government authority.

The Dobern and Capitol-Goss neighborhoods recently completed an abbreviated Neighborhood Revitalization Plan as the final phase of the City of San Jose's Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy (NRS) for that neighborhood. The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative process is similar to the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy process in that it also includes the development of comprehensive and coordinated community-driven neighborhood improvement plans. The concepts and improvements listed in this plan are consistent with the Dobern/Capitol-Goss NRS Plan.

A. Purpose of the Plan

The East Valley/680 Communities Neighborhood Improvement Plan is the community's "blueprint" for the improvement of the area. This Plan identifies the issues that detract from the quality of life in East Valley/680 Communities and provides a long-term approach to addressing these issues. This Plan is an active document. The next phase of the Strong Neighborhoods process is for residents and business owners to use this Plan to guide their efforts as they work with the City and County to implement the action items listed in Chapter 5. The action items are intended to address community priorities through existing programs and resources or the attraction of new funds and the creation of new programs. The Plan will also be used by the Redevelopment Agency to guide redevelopment.

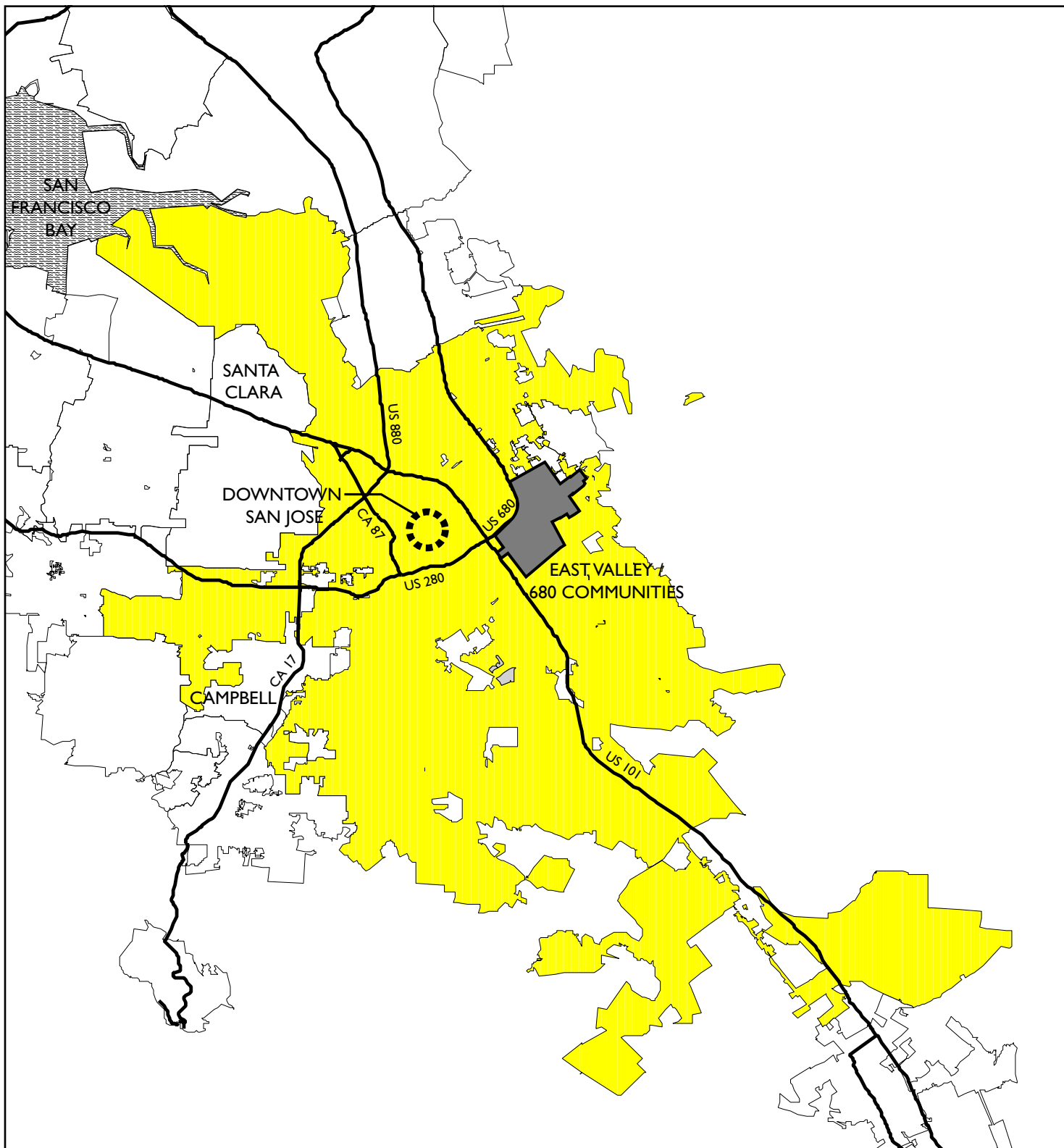


FIGURE 1

STUDY AREA LOCATIONS

ment efforts, provided that the community is in support of those efforts. If and when this area is designated as a Redevelopment Area, redevelopment funds can be spent in any area where a redevelopment project area exists, including unincorporated areas. However, any redevelopment spending proposed for unincorporated areas must be subject to approval by the County Board of Supervisors.

B. Summary of Process

Over the past year, community members, including a 30-member Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC), worked very closely with City staff and the Consultant Team to create this plan document. The NAC, drawn from residents, neighborhood associations, businesses, the faith community, property owners, schools and other stakeholders, directed the planning

process by developing a vision of a strong neighborhood, agreeing on priorities, and formulating a neighborhood improvement plan. The NAC also served as a liaison between the City and the community-at-large. The NAC met monthly from October 2000 through December 2001.

In addition to NAC meetings, community-wide workshops were held. These meetings were co-chaired by NAC members on a rotating basis. At the first of the public workshops on November 8, 2000, community members identified their major issues and concerns. The community identified a wide range of issues, including traffic and parking, pedestrian safety, housing supply, open space and recreation, street and streetscape, neighborhood security, noise, and community services, which are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4: Plan Concepts. At subsequent meetings, the NAC further refined the



Residents of East Valley/680 Communities at a community meeting

list of issues identified by the community and held meetings where City staff and the consultant team gave presentations about existing services and programs. All meetings were open to the public and were well-attended by additional community members.

The development of the East Valley/680 Communities Neighborhood Improvement Plan included the following steps:

- Assessing the existing conditions of the study area.
- Identifying the issues facing the area.
- Developing a clear and realistic vision for the future of the neighborhood.
- Learning about existing City policies, programs and resources.
- Exploring potential improvements for issues identified.
- Identifying community priorities.
- Developing an action plan for implementation of the planned improvements and programs.

C. Organization of the Plan

Following this introduction, the Plan is organized into five chapters:

Chapter 1 is this introduction which gives background on the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative in general, the purpose of this plan and the overall planning process.

Chapter 2 - "Existing Conditions" includes brief descriptions of the study area's land uses, transportation systems, infrastructure, residential and commercial building conditions, park, recreation and community facilities, and programs and services.

Chapter 3 - "Vision, Goals and Objectives" paints a picture of what the residents of East Valley/680 Communities envision for the future of their neighborhoods. It also presents a set of goals and objectives formulated by the community to achieve their vision.

Chapter 4 - "Plan Concepts" describes the key issues raised by the NAC and the community, organized by topic, and provides recommendations to address these issues.

Chapter 5 - "Improvement Plan" outlines the actions necessary to implement the planned improvements and programs discussed in Chapter 4.